

I write to urge you to reject the \"Notice of Proposed Rulemaking #02-230\". Not only would it severely limit the functionality of digital television sets, it would also slow the adoption of digital technology by making it less attractive to consumers. This •broadcast flag• proposal would also hamper innovation in digital televisions and other electronic equipment capable of receiving digital broadcasts. It would ultimately block legitimate consumer usage (e.g., time shifting), while being no impediment to those who pirate for profit.

While piracy is a valid concern, it is not the only issue that should be considered. Entertainment industry protections must be weighed against consumers• freedom to purchase and employ technology to enhance and utilize content. If enacted, the broadcast flag proposal would ignore these concerns and turn technological development over to an all-powerful subset of the entertainment industry.

In recent years, the entertainment industry has become acutely aware of the challenges it faces in the digital era. But these challenges do not give it the right to restrict consumers• abilities to record their favorite programs, or purchase electronic devices that allow them to record and save memorable family moments. The market is best suited to address and weigh these competing concerns and the FCC should give it time to work - particularly in a nascent industry like digital television -- before handing over consumer autonomy to the whims of entertainment industry executives.